

Serial No. 09/629,321
Amtdt. dated June 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action of March 8, 2004

Attorney Docket No. PF01869NA

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 15 and 22 remain in this application. Claims 1 through 3, 10 and 15 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Also, claims 4 through 8, 13 and 22 have been amended.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,532,368 to Hild, et al. ("Hild, et al. patent"), and claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,408,187 to Merriam ("Merriam patent"). Also, claims 4 through 6, 8 through 12, 15 and 22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The Examiner has acknowledged that claims 4 through 6, 8 through 12, 15 and 22 are directed to allowable subject matter. Accordingly, each of claims 4 through 6, 8 and 22 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its corresponding base claim. Similarly, claims 7 and 13 have been amended to include the limitations of dependent claims 10 and 15, respectively. Claims 9, 11, 12 and 14 depend from and include all limitations of independent claims 7 and 13. Therefore, claims 4 through 9, 11 through 14 and 22 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 7, 13 and 14 and the objection to claims 4 through 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 22 are respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. Also, no amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless Applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct any additional fees arising as a result of this response, including any fees for Extensions of Time, or any other communication from or to credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2117.

It is submitted that the claims clearly define the invention, are supported by the specification and drawings, and are in a condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Should the Examiner have any


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questions or concerns that may expedite prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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 06/07/04
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